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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/312,916	05/17/1999	WILLIAM A. ALLEN	02103/355001	3200

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EXAMINER

GRIER, LAURA A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2644

DATE MAILED: 12/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/312,916	Applicant(s) ALLEN, WILLIAM A.	
	Examiner Laura A. Grier	Art Unit 2644	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 November 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-45 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 27-33 and 41-45 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 and 34-36 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 37-40 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7, 17, 24, 35, 38 and 40 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 May 1999 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7/31/02</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of claims 1-26 and 33-40 in the reply filed on 11/2/04 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the restriction is not deemed proper. This is not found persuasive because the inventions were drawn to different processing techniques for audio in respect the various characteristics of the audio signals.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Even though, the applicant elected claim 33, it will not be examined because claim 33 depends upon claim 27, which was not elected.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 7, 17, 24, 35, 38 and 40 are objected to because of the following informalities: a "period (.)" should be places at the end of the sentence. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 37-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

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5. A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. See MPEP § 2173.05(c). Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claims 37-40 recites the broad recitation, and the claim also recites a limitation which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation (see justification below).

Regarding independent claims 37 and 39, recites, "... determining whether said audio signal is an analog signal or digital signal and for determining the number and directional designators of digital signal". The claim language initially indicates the capability of processing either analog or digital signals, yet within the same limitation, the claim language is directed exclusively to processing digital signals. Thus, for the purpose of examination, the claims are indefinite.

Claims 38, and 40 are dependent upon claims 37 and 39, and thus are rejected accordingly.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-26, 34-36 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Regarding claims 1, 25, 34, 36, the prior art of record is drawn to determining the directional designators and/or direction input of channels. However, the prior art of record fails to disclose the detecting the number of directional input channels, therein as claimed.

Regarding claims 11, 18, the prior art of record is drawn to determining the directional designators and/or direction input of channels, and discloses respectively analog and digital signals. However, the prior art of record fails to disclose the detecting the number of directional input channels, and fails to determine whether the audio signal is analog or digital, and then processing them accordingly, therein as claimed.


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Laura A. Grier whose telephone number is (571) 272-7518. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:30 am - 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vivian Chin can be reached on (571) 272-7848. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Laura A. Grier
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2644

December 11, 2005